



**(U) Farewell, but Forever in the Fight!**

FROM: [REDACTED]  
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(U) Thirty-nine years ago, I went to the Army recruiter and told him I wanted to be a spy, ala James Bond. He didn't bat an eye. He just said, "Yuh can't be a spy yet son because you're too young...Yuh might get carded in a bar and blow your cover." But...he had a great deal for me... I could enlist in something called the Army Security Agency for four years and then they would send me to spy school. I think I still have the scar tissue inside my gum where he set the hook. :-) Well, what a fantastic journey it has been. I have served with some extraordinary military and civilian people, and even some true heroes, during four assignments at NSA and more than 20 years overseas. I am humbly grateful to all who I have worked for and with for their vision, talents, and sometimes most important of all, their patience with me.

(U) I started my SIGINT career with an initial assignment in Vietnam in 1965 with the 1st Infantry Division; the famous "Big Red One." There were approximately 30,000 military personnel in Vietnam at that time. When I left Vietnam for the last time in June 1968, there were 530,000 personnel and we were well on the way to the final tally of over 50,000 Americans killed and many more maimed for life. I survived combat without a scratch, including being knocked on my butt during the TET offensive by a 122mm rocket and a horrible and unforgettable battle for some numbered mountain top during the battle for Dak To in November 1967. I looked men in their alive eyes in the morning, and their dead eyes by the end of the day. One of these men had personally ensured I was extracted by helicopter just hours before the mortar company location I was using for short-range DF operations was overrun.

(U//FOUO) Why tell this war story now? It has been these memories that fueled my continuing efforts to ensure SIGINT is In The Fight over the past 30-something years. However, once again, we have our armed forces in grave danger. Moreover, for the first time in our history as a country, we have enemies who have defined all Americans--no matter whether they were just conceived or taking their last breaths due to old age--as legitimate targets to be destroyed! Although sadly we continue to suffer combat losses in Iraq, a non-trivial difference is the culmination of the efforts of our civilians, the military, and yes, even our partners in the Congress, who have provided the phenomenal SIGINT capability we marshalled in support of this latest fight. It is heartening to see the success of such things as the RSOC concept which I worked on when we were trying to get the Congress to pay for it more than ten years ago. Perhaps forgotten, or even unknown by most, is that the RSOC concept would never had seen the light of day if it weren't for the courageous study done by MG Thomas Flynn in 1991-92 which postulated that if NSA and the services didn't come up with a plan and resources, then the SCEs (Service Cryptologic Elements) might not be viable in the future (meaning now!). We continue to fight similar planning and resourcing battles today as we shake out the roles for SCE involvement in target development and CNE/CNA (Computer Network Exploitation/Attack). As an overall organization, we don't have national-tactical integration just right, but we are light years ahead of where we were almost 40 years ago.

(U//FOUO) I have enjoyed all of my assignments at NSAW and in the field for NSA. The work hasn't always been fun, but it has always been accomplished by the finest citizens of the United States and our allies. My last year as the Chief of the National Tactical Integration Office has been especially rewarding because I have seen the workforce grow in their understanding of what being in the fight really means, and their efforts to ensure it happens now and well into the future. I also want to commend and thank the many partners in CRD and the other SID organizations who are equally dedicated and use their considerable talents to ensure our armed forces and deployed civilians are provided the information they need to accomplish their mission with the least amount of threat possible. NSA is truly a national treasure...not because of its technology... but because of its people. It has been my great honor to serve with you all! Farewell, God Bless America, and...stay In The Fight!

[REDACTED]

(U) p.s. You are cordially invited to attend my retirement ceremony at the Fort Meade McGlachlin parade ground at 0900 on 15 July.

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